

# Spark Gap

Vol. 30, Issue 3, March 2013 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities for thirty years*

## On Our MARC...

In January, my wife and I were fortunate enough to spend a few days in Orlando with our family. On one of the many bus rides in the land of the "Mouse," we struck up a conversation with the driver, who asked us where home was. When he heard we were from Indiana, he said he couldn't take our cold weather. I countered by saying that as much as I enjoyed the Florida sun, I didn't think I could live somewhere that I had to board up my home every so often for a hurricane. The driver said that hurricanes churn around out in the ocean for many days in advance giving you plenty of notice, which was far better than the tornadoes that we get here with no warning. That's when it struck me that it was all just a matter perspective and preparedness.

March is Severe Weather Preparedness Month across the U.S and the week of the 24th – 30th is Severe Weather Preparedness Week in Indiana. As has been the case in past years, there will be two warning tests on Weds., March 27th. We will have two Skywarn test nets that day on the WA9RDF repeater, so please try to check in for one or both.

Severe weather can strike at any time and we need to be prepared to take care of ourselves, our families, and our communities. We also need to be ready to assist the EMA and the Johnson County Sheriff's Dept., should they need us. So, now is the time to make sure that your home disaster kit is stocked ([www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)) and your ham radio go-kit packed.

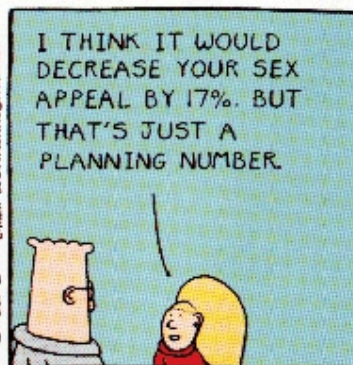
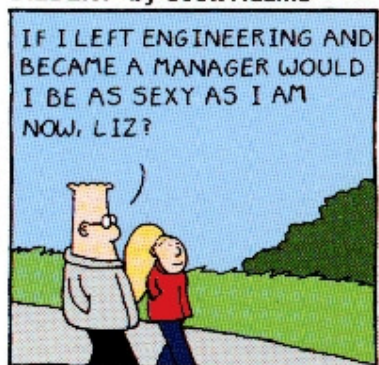
The program at our March 16th meeting will be a discussion of ARES and RACES, led by N9SIU and KB9LOT. You will find a new combined application for both on the [midstatehams.org](http://midstatehams.org) website. It can be used for seeking first-time membership in ARES and RACES or for current members to update their contact information and capabilities.

See you Saturday! I'll have the coffee pot on!

Bob - KC9NJM  
President

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# MARC PREPARES FOR SCOUT VISIT

MARC played host to Whiteland Boy Scout troop 615. The scouts toured the MARC Radio Room to satisfy a Radio Merit Badge requirement to visit a radio installation. Rusty Kirts N9LLP, spoke briefly about the Emergency Operations Center and how the club and area hams volunteer to provide communications and information that emergency managers can use.

He also spoke about the Skywarn Weather Spotting program and how area amateurs are the ground truth eyes and ears for the National Weather Service.



Rusty N9LLP and Ben KC9UMC explain the radio room

Boy scout Ben Hagen- KC9UMC and his dad Eric KC9UIK helped explain the function of the various radios mounted in the room. They talked a little about how HF radio is used for long distance communications. All three hams stressed that Amateur Radio can be a life learning experience.

Dave Oldham-KC9WIP is one of the Troop 615 leaders. He said Rusty talked about how Field Day prepares amateurs for times when a disaster might strike. The scouts learned how everything must be set-up using temporary structures and no commercial power and then make as many contacts as possible during the 24-hour marathon. They stressed how remaining communications can become overloaded and unusable. That's where Amateur Radio shows its value.

While on site the scouts also toured the jail.

-W8ISH

Photos by Dave Oldham KC9WIP

## TROOP 615 and the RADIO ROOM



## MARC HOSTS BSA TROOP 615

Members of the BSA Troop 615 from Whiteland were guests of MARC for a presentation on amateur radio Tuesday February 12<sup>th</sup>. The tour was to complete the requirements for them to be awarded their Radio Merit Badge. The final requirement was to visit either a broadcast station, 911 center or an amateur radio station, fortunately for Ham radio - they chose us. It was a packed house with about a dozen scouts and four adults. Amateur radio had a good showing as there were two scouts, Ben KC9UMC and Jake KC9VLU who are already licensed hams and one, Bryce, studying to take his test. We discussed how amateur radio is the original Facebook, Twitter and Myspace – minus the computers and smart phones in the early days. We talked about Morse code, the original ‘texting’ shorthand with a copy of the “q” signals being passed out.

I explained about how many communications technologies used today started with amateur radio experimentation in new technologies and APRS mapping was used to demonstrate GPS and how it tracked Eric KC9UIK from his house to the EOC. To entertain the PC junkie in the group, a brief overview of Echolink, IRLP, Packett and other data modes was briefly explained and how Ham Radio can be mixed in with computers for more fun. I described the use of the EOC Radio Room and how amateur radio is used to support emergency and disaster communications. One of the closing points was that anyone who is interested in computers, radio or electronics – Ham radio is a fun hobby that can lead to a good paying career. And of course being good hams each scout left with one of MARC’s 25 anniversary QSL Cards to confirm our QSO. My thanks to Eric KC9UIK, Ben KC9UMC, Jake KC9VLU, Joe KA9QBF for being there and helping with the presentation.

..... Rusty N9LLP



## ***Florida Hams Prove that Ham Radio Works When Cell Phones Don't***

After a day of exploring the Green Swamp Wildlife Management Area -- which covers 50,692 protected acres in Florida's Lake, Polk and Sumter Counties -- with his grandson, Joe Cody, KE4WDP, of Winter Haven, Florida, saw that the roads were flooding and becoming hazardous. As he tried to drive out of the area, Cody's small pick-up truck got bogged down in the mud. Since he was out of cell phone range, Cody tried calling for help on the Dade City 146.880 repeater. Richard Parker, KF4ORW, of Dade City, Florida, heard the call and answered.

After hearing the situation, Parker called 911 in Pasco County, who put him in touch with the dispatch in neighboring Polk County. Cody passed his location on to Parker, who in turn passed it on to the Polk County Sheriff's Office. "Polk County 911 took over trying to get help," Parker said. "They called me back several times for more information and I was able to relay information from Joe to them. Then Ted Bulmanski, W4TKB, who is also from Dade City, started monitoring and copying Joe's information."

About 30 minutes later, Parker saw a helicopter fly over and around Cody's position, and after another 30 minutes, Cody radioed back on the repeater, saying he was on his way home -- thanks to a Lake County Deputy in a Sheriff's Office truck that had a winch. "We learned that Joe was eight miles inside Lake County," Parker explained. "That's why the Lake County Sheriff's Office responded instead of the Polk County authorities. The Polk County Sheriff's Office called me back to say that the helicopter from Lake County found the truck inside Lake County and sent both a deputy from Lake County, as well as a Fish and Game Officer and winched him out of the mud. They called me back to thank us for assisting the stranded pair. Ham radio still works when other forms of communications don't."

-- Thanks to ARRL West Central Florida Section Public Information Coordinator Kevin Poorman, KV4CT, for the information.

ARRL Newsletter March 7, 2013

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*Saturday May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013*

There are still a few amateur radio volunteer positions that need to be filled for the running of the Indianapolis 500 Festival Mini Marathon. Amateur radio is used along the route of the mini marathon for safety and patient tracking if a runner has to go to the hospital. If you would like to help with this event please contact Mike Palmer, N9FEB the amateur radio volunteer coordinator for this event. Last year the Mini used nearly 100 amateur radio volunteers to help provide service and public safety.

Please contact Mike at N9FEB @ Comcast.net

# 2013 HAMFESTS

- April 13**      **Columbus Amateur Radio Club Hamfest**, Community Building in  
Columbus, Indiana   8 AM til 2PM <http://www.carcnet.org/>
- May 17-19**      **Dayton Hamvention**, 8 AM til 6 PM   Hara Arena  
1001 Shiloh Springs Rd., Dayton, Ohio <http://www.hamvention.org/>
- July 13**      **Indianapolis Hamfest**, Marion County Fairgrounds,  
<http://www.indyhamfest.com/>
- October 5**      **Hoosier Hills Hamfest**, Lawrence County 4H Fairgrounds,  
11261 US Hwy 50 West., Bedford, Indiana <http://www.w9qyq.org/>
- Nov. 16-17**      **Indiana State Convention, Fort Wayne Hamfest & Computer Expo.**  
Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, Fort Wayne, Indiana  
<http://www.fortwaynehamfest.com/>



# MID-STATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the THIRD SATURDAY of each month in the basement of the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, Indiana 46131.

See our website, [www.midstatehams.org](http://www.midstatehams.org), for maps on how to get to our meeting.

Everyone is welcome; you do not have to be a HAM to attend our meetings or a member of the club.

**WA9RDF**  
**Repeater**  
**146.835/**  
**146.235 MHz**  
**151.4 Hz PL Tone**

**Club Officers:**  
**President: Robert Jones – KC9NJM**  
**Vice President: Jack Parker – W8ISH**  
**Secretary: Rhonda Curtis– WS9H**  
**Treasurer: Jacki Frederick – KI6QOG**  
**Repeater Trustee: Steve Brown – N9LC**

**Weekly Net: Sunday evening 7:00 PM ARES/RACES members and ALL RADIO AMATEURS**

*The Official Newsletter of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club*

*P.O. Box 836*  
*Franklin, Indiana*  
*46131*

**Editor: Robert LaGrange N9SIU**

*Please send your articles to my email [n9siu@yahoo.com](mailto:n9siu@yahoo.com) no later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the month*

